

CLAIMS

1. An infrared ear thermometer comprising
a housing,
5 a probe coupled to the housing;
an infrared sensor received at least in part within the probe,
a storage unit coupled to the housing and formed to define a cavity and
an aperture formed through a bottom wall of the storage unit to communicate with the
cavity, the aperture being sized to receive a portion of the probe therethrough, and
10 a probe cover positioned within the cavity of the storage unit.
2. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, wherein the storage
unit is coupled to a bottom portion of the housing.
3. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, further comprising a
probe-cover dispenser positioned within the cavity of the storage unit and wherein the
15 probe cover is positioned within the probe-cover dispenser.
4. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 3, further comprising
multiple probe covers stored within the probe-cover dispenser.
5. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 4, wherein the probe
covers are attached to one another along a perforated edge of each probe cover.
- 20 6. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 3, wherein the probe-
cover dispenser is formed to define a cavity and a slot in communication with the
cavity and the slot is formed to dispense a probe cover therethrough.
7. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, wherein the probe
cover includes an outer portion and an inner portion coupled to the outer portion and
25 wherein the inner portion is made of a plastic material.
8. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 1, wherein the storage
unit further includes a rim coupled to an outer surface of the bottom wall to define an
area formed to receive the probe cover.
9. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 8, wherein the rim is
30 positioned to substantially surround the aperture formed through the bottom wall of
the storage unit.

10. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 8, wherein probe cover is substantially D-shaped and the area formed to receive the probe cover is substantially D-shaped.

5 11. An infrared ear thermometer comprising
a housing,
a storage unit formed to define a cavity adapted to receive a disposable probe cover therein, and
means for coupling the storage unit to the housing to enable a user to remove the storage unit from the housing.

10 12. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 11, wherein the storage unit includes an outer wall and a bottom wall coupled to the outer wall to cooperate with the outer wall to define the cavity and the bottom wall is formed to include an aperture in communication with the cavity.

15 13. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 12, further comprising a probe coupled to the housing, and wherein the aperture of the bottom wall of the storage unit is sized to receive at least a portion of the probe therethrough.

14. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 12, wherein the storage unit further includes a rim coupled to an outer surface of the bottom wall to define an area adapted to receive the disposable cover thereon.

20 15. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 11, further comprising the disposable probe cover stored within the cavity of the storage unit.

25 16. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 15, wherein the disposable probe cover is substantially planar and includes an outer portion formed to define an aperture and an inner portion coupled to the outer portion and positioned substantially within the aperture.

17. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 16, further comprising a probe coupled to the housing and wherein the inner portion of the disposable probe cover is flexible such that the inner portion of the disposable probe cover is substantially able to be formed into the shape of the probe.

30 18. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 11, wherein the means for coupling includes a detent formed within a bottom portion of the housing and a notch formed within the storage unit to receive the detent of the housing therein.

19. An infrared ear thermometer comprising
a housing and probe coupled to the housing,
a storage unit coupled to the housing,
a probe-cover dispenser contained within the storage unit, and
5 a probe cover applicator coupled to the storage unit and configured
to retain a probe cover to allow a user to position a probe cover onto the probe.

20. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 19, wherein the probe
cover applicator includes a bottom wall of the storage unit, an aperture formed
through the bottom wall to communicate with a cavity of the storage unit, and an
10 outer rim coupled to the bottom wall to cooperate with the bottom wall to define an
area adapted to receive a probe cover.

21. The infrared ear thermometer of claim 19, wherein the probe-
cover dispenser includes a bottom wall, side walls each coupled to the bottom wall,
and a top wall coupled to the each of the side walls, the top, bottom, and side walls
15 cooperating to define a cavity adapted to store one or more probe covers therein, and
the probe-cover dispenser further includes an opening formed through the top wall for
communication with the cavity and adapted to dispense a probe cover therethrough.

22. A method of attaching a disposable probe cover to an infrared
ear thermometer comprising
20 removing a storage unit of the infrared ear thermometer from a housing
of the infrared ear thermometer,
removing a probe-cover dispenser contained within the storage unit,
removing a disposable probe cover from within the dispenser,
placing the disposable probe cover over an aperture of the storage unit,
25 and
inserting a probe of the infrared ear thermometer into the aperture of
the storage unit to cause the disposable probe cover to attach to the probe of the
infrared thermometer.